Detection of **adulterated cases**

†*227. SHRI NAND KISHORE YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the petrol and petroleum products are being adulterated with the nexus of the officers of the public sector undertakings;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the details of powers vested with these officers to stop adulteration and the number of cases of abuse of these powers reported during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that they have no established case of involvement of their officers in adulteration cases.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above. However, there are Provisions under the Conduct Rules as also the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG), 2005, to take action against officers found involved in irregularities/ malpractices, including adulteration.

(c) The officers are empowered to inspect retail outlets, draw samples and send the samples to notified laboratories for testing. They are also empowered to carry out search and seizure under the provisions of various control orders issued under the Essential Commodities Act. In case any irregularity/malpractice is established, action is initiated against the erring dealer under the MDG/Dealership Agreement. OMCs have reported that no case of abuse of these powers by their officers has been established during the last three years.

Changes in co-operative sector legislation

*228. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Panel set up by Government to suggest changes in the co-operative sector legislation;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) what are the terms of reference given to the Panel;

(c) by when the Panel is expected to submit its report; and

(d) whether any suggestions have been received in the Ministry with regard to professionalising the functioning of the co-operatives?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The Task Force set up under the Chairmanship of Prof. A. Vaidyanathan submitted its report on the revival of Short-Term Co-operative Credit Structure on 14.02.2005. Its report on the Long-Term Co-operative Credit Structure is expected shortly. The Terms of reference of the Task Force were as under:—

(i) To recommend an implementable action plan for reviving the Rural Co-operative Banking Institutions taking into consideration, *inter-alia,* main recommendations made by various committees in this regard.

(ii) To suggest an appropriate regulatory framework and the amendments which may be necessary for the purpose in the relevant laws.

(iii) To make an assessment of the financial assistance that the Co-operative Banking Institutions will require for revival, the mode of such assistance, its sharing pattern and phasing.

(iv) To suggest any other measures required for improving the efficiency and viability of Rural Co-operative Credit Institutions.

(d) With regard to professionalising the functioning of the co-operatives, the Task Force has suggested the following:—

(i) Bringing Cooperative Banks on par with Commercial Banks in terms of Prudent Financial Regulation;

(ii) Prescribing fit and proper criteria by Reserve Bank of India for election to the Boards of Banks;

(iii) Prescribing minimum qualifications for CEOs of the Cooperative Banks, etc.